



## The European Eco-Label newsletter

### Focus

#### 10 Years of the European Flower Announcement of a Publicity event

The Flower will celebrate its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year. To mark this milestone, and the recent progress in the number of eco-labelled products, the Commission is organising a significant publicity event in Brussels this autumn (the exact date will be published in due time). The aim of the event is to bring together consumers, producers and governmental and non-governmental representatives, but most importantly to make the Flower better known amongst consumers, businesses and industry through Europe.

To provide the maximum exposure for the eco-label, the two-day celebration will feature various information activities. Eco-label holders will have the opportunity to present their products. An exhibition of eco-labelled products will be organised where the public will be able to discover the range of flowered products available throughout the European Union. The afternoon of the first day, a panel discussion will be held in which eco-label holders will share their views on the EU Flower with the public. In the evening, an informal gathering will offer consumers, retailers, the press and other interested parties with an excellent opportunity to meet and have a chat with current eco-label holders. The focus of the evening will be to make the EU Flower more transparent to the general public.

The main event of the second day will be an official award ceremony where the European Commissioner for the Environment, Margot Walström, will congratulate all the companies which have chosen to use the Flower for their products. And, following the award ceremony – around noon – the Commissioner will hold a press conference. The celebration will be officially closed by a buffet lunch.

An estimated 400 stakeholders are expected to attend the celebration. Apart from eco-label holders, other stakeholders who will be invited include retailers, consumers, industry/business representatives including small and medium sized enterprises, environmental representatives, the press, marketing representatives, members of the EU Eco-labelling Board and Commission staff. Throughout the festivities a special information booth will give all interested parties a choice of documents and other practical information on the application procedures and benefits of the EU Flower. ►

### Content

#### Focus

10 Years of the European Flower ..... 1

#### Reportage

Eco-label holders have the word ..... 2

News in brief ..... 4

On the web ..... 4

Agenda ..... 4

### Editorial

Dear reader, the year 2002 marks the tenth anniversary of the EU Flower. The Focus article on the front page provides you with some details on a large public event later in the year and how you can show your interest if you would like to participate. Another important milestone is the criteria development for the first product group in the service sector: tourist accommodation. Read all about it and more in this issue.

European Eco-label team  
DG Environment  
D 3 -Industry and Implementation

<http://europa.eu.int/ecolabel>



# Reportage

## Pre-registration procedure

To secure a balanced international and stakeholder representation, participation in the event is by invitation only (invited participants will be asked to cover their own travelling and accommodation expenses. However, in exceptional cases some provisions may be made).

Interested parties are welcome to submit the attached pre-registration form (also downloadable from <http://europa.eu.int/ecolabel>) with a short statement of your specific interest for the event.

DG Environment will then select participants on the basis of their interest expressed, and of the stakeholder group they present. Invitations will be sent out in due time before the event.

Eco-label holders should indicate whether they would like to exhibit their products and should indicate their interest to participate in the podium discussion.

Please send your Pre-registration forms (deadline 31 May 2002) to:

EU Eco-label Help Desk,  
c/o Bradley Dunbar Associates,  
Scotland House,  
Rond-Point Schuman 6,  
B-1040 Brussels,  
fax: +32 2 282 84 49  
or e-mail [ecolabel@cec.eu.int](mailto:ecolabel@cec.eu.int)



## Eco-label holders have the word

**Eco-label holders play an important role in promoting the Flower across the European Union. By bringing eco-labelled products to the market, they provide significant visibility to the Flower; they help consumers to identify products of environmental excellence and they give the signal to the market that they chose the Flower to demonstrate their respect for the environment.**

### Why the EU Flower?

As participation in the European eco-label scheme is voluntary, the motivation for using this label differs from one producer to another. In the case of new eco-label holder Winfeld-Hansens – who sells dyed yarns to knitters – it may be due to requests from customers. For others such as Tikkurila Paints it is because they “want to increase consumers’ environmental awareness and make it easier for them to choose products with a low environmental impact.” More specifically, the paints and varnishes sector “is particularly susceptible to issues such as gas emissions, residuals, etc. which compels many companies to implement less polluting production methods,” declares Vincente Prada Gómez of the paint producer Landecolor. Whatever the motivation, the EU Flower is very often part of a larger environmental policy. For example, S-Thygesen, one of our Danish textiles producers, who is also certified under ISO 14001 and registered under EMAS, decided to join the Flower “to take that extra step to get ahead of the competition and stand out as the obvious choice for the customers”.

### Better off with the Flower

Difficult as it may be to measure whether the EU Flower provides a competitive advantage *vis-à-vis* non-flowered products, there is a general consensus among eco-label holders that consumers would most likely buy eco-labelled products in cases where the competitive products don't differ much. “If we didn't have eco-labels our competitors would be better off,”

reveals Riita Eskelinen, Marketing Communications Manager of Tikkurila Paints. Lars Melson, Division Manager of Winfeld-Hansens Bomuldsspinderi, claims that having the EU Flower may give his company “an advantage here in Europe relative to textile companies from the Far East.”

### Sign of environmental excellence, and also a label of quality

First of all the EU Flower is a label of environmental excellence. For many eco-label holders the EU label is also a label of quality and they regret that the market does not yet perceive it as such. Thus Lars Melson of Winfeld-Hansens is of the opinion that the title of the EU Flower should be changed to reflect its quality aspects.

### Increasing awareness, the challenge of the future

Increasing awareness among consumers, producers and retailers is perhaps the EU Flower's biggest challenge for the future. Luc Minne, the Managing Director of Norland SA – a company that produces soil improvers – claims that “the eco-label is not known and hardly acknowledged. It needs to be made more popular. The future of the Flower will not only depend on the number of products available”. Indeed, public awareness and the visibility of eco-labelled products in the market go hand in hand. A number of eco-label holders conduct smaller information campaigns but they feel that large awareness campaigns are needed. In this respect, a study has shown that the massive information campaign conducted in Denmark in 2001 did substantially increase the



1. The Community eco-management and audit scheme: <http://europa.eu.int/comm/environment/emas/>

## New Eco-label licenses

(First quarter 2002)

### Indoor Paints and Varnishes:

Landecolor, S.A. (E), Tikkurila Paints Oy (FIN), Nokian Laatumaalit Oy, previous Eco-label holder has merged with Tikkurila Paints Oy.

### Textiles:

Niels Mikkelsen's Tricotagefabrik A/S (DK), Winfeld-Hansens Bomuldsspindleri A/S (DK), A/S S. Thygesen Fabrics (DK), Bekaert Decoration Textiles n.v. (B)

## The EU Eco-label by country

(Number of holders as of 28 March 2002)

Denmark	22	Netherlands	2
France	20	Belgium	2
Italy	18	Germany	2
Spain	13	United Kingdom	2
Greece	9	Finland	1
Sweden	8	Ireland	1
Portugal	3	TOTAL	103

## The EU Flower by Product Group

Product Group	Number of awards
Textile products	37
Indoor paints + varnishes	27
Tissue paper	8
Soil improvers + growing media	7
Dishwashing detergents	6
Bed mattresses	4
Footwear	4
Laundry detergents	3
Copying paper	2
Refrigerators	2
Dishwashers	1
Light bulbs	1
Hand dishwashing detergents	1
All purpose cleaners and cleaners for sanitary facilities	0
Hard floor coverings	0
Personal computers	0
Portable computers	0
Televisions	0
Washing machines	0
Total	103

A full and updated list of the various product groups and eco-labelled products can be obtained from our website.

<http://europa.eu.int/comm/environment/ecolabel/index.htm>

awareness of the EU Flower. "For three or four weeks at dinner time there was something about the Flower on television," says Anja Breum, from S-Thygesen. And not surprisingly, Denmark is now the Member State with the largest number of EU eco-label holders.

Mr. Casesnovas, Director of Customer Service Process for AKZO Nobel Decorative Coatings in Spain, definitely believes that the Flower has a bright future. He is of the opinion that the future of the Flower in Spain rests with the next generation, "young people are asking more and more for these kinds of environmentally friendly products." However, he argues that more awareness raising campaigns will need to be

conducted and that more market pressure is required to stimulate the production of eco-labelled products in Spain. With this objective in mind, the Commission is currently carrying out two marketing studies to raise the profile of the Flower in the Spanish market.

*Dear eco-label holders, we are very interested to know your points of view and your opinions. Don't hesitate to send your comments or information on your eco-labelled products to our help desk [ecolabel@cec.eu.int](mailto:ecolabel@cec.eu.int) if you would like to see them included in the Newsletter or on the website.*

Company name	Represented by	Product group	Country	Holder since
Winfeld-Hansens Bomuldsspindleri	Lars Melson Division Manager	Textiles	Denmark	2002
Landecolor S.A. <a href="http://www.landecolor.es">www.landecolor.es</a>	Vicente Prada Gómez, Director General	Paints and varnishes	Spain	2002
S. Thygesen <a href="http://www.s-thygesen.dk">www.s-thygesen.dk</a>	Anja Breum, Quality and Environmental Manager	Textiles	Denmark	2002
Norland <a href="http://www.norland.be">www.norland.be</a>	Luc Minne, Managing Director	Soil improvers	Belgium	2000
Tikkurila Paints <a href="http://www.tikkurila.fi">www.tikkurila.fi</a>	Riita Eskelinen, Marketing Communications Manager	Paints and varnishes	Finland	1997
AKZO Nobel Decorative Coatings <a href="http://www.akzonobel.com">www.akzonobel.com</a>	Jose Manuel Casesnovas, Director of Customer Service Process (Spain)	Paints and varnishes	Spain	1996

## News in Brief

### LIFE and the EU eco-label

LIFE is the European financial instrument for the environment. It supports demonstration projects aiming at the development, updating and implementing of the Community environmental policy. The category "LIFE environment" has a section on products, intended for demonstration projects and preparatory actions on activities regarding Integrated Product Policy (IPP).

There are a number of on-going projects in this area. For example, a LIFE project called "Green Flag for Greener Hotels" has concluded recently. The final report is available on the Flower website (see page on tourist accommodation under "product groups").

If you wish to receive a list of projects related to eco-labelling, please contact the EU eco-label Helpdesk ([ecolabel@cec.eu.int](mailto:ecolabel@cec.eu.int)) or visit the LIFE project database on: <http://europa.eu.int/comm/life/envir/database.htm>

If you wish to develop a project related to eco-labelling with other partners in different Member States, we would like to encourage you to do so. Please note that deadlines for submission to the national authorities will be around October. More information about the LIFE programme on: <http://europa.eu.int/comm/life/home.htm>

# New areas for the EU Flower

## Eco-label for tourist accommodation under development

Tourist accommodation is the first service sector which will join the Flower scheme. This group is characterised by its complexity, since two elements have to be considered: the structure which determines the type of accommodation and the service itself offered to the guest.

The development of criteria is at its early stage. It focuses on the lodging service, which includes various elements, such as sleeping, reception and food services, common services and communication. Attention will also be given to the environmental quality level for services beyond lodging. The structures under consideration include collective establishments (such as hotels) and private accommodation.

For more information please visit the section "product groups" on the Flower website.

## Revision of textile criteria is concluded

The new criteria, which are valid until the end of May 2007, aim at promoting the reduction of water pollution related to the key processes throughout the textile manufacturing chain (fibre production, spinning, weaving, knitting, bleaching, dyeing and finishing).



From 1 June 2002, applications must satisfy the new criteria. Those producers who have been awarded with the Flower logo or have submitted their application before that date can still apply the previous criteria, whose validity has been extended until 31 May 2003.

As a result of the revision the requirements for the inclusion of certain chemicals are now stricter. New opportunities arise from the extension of the product group definition to accessories (such as handkerchiefs, scarves, bags, shopping bags, rucksacks and belts) and fibres. Textiles producers can also take advantage of the synergies with other product groups. For example, it is foreseen that textile materials used in the production of eco-labelled bed mattresses should meet the relevant Flower criteria.

Ecological clothes will feature during Green Week, where a Fashion show has been organised. Another session will explore the life cycle of T-shirts, looking at the environmental impacts from the production of the raw material, through the various stages until the final disposal of the product.

# Agenda

## Revision of product groups

(Scheduled adoption)

- Bed-Mattresses → summer 2002
- Indoor Paints and Varnishes → summer 2002
- Lightbulbs → summer 2002
- Copying and graphic paper → summer 2002
- Detergents for dishwashers → autumn 2002
- Laundry detergents → autumn 2002
- Washing machines → autumn 2002
- Refrigerators → autumn 2002

## Products groups under development

(Scheduled adoption)

- Vacuum cleaners → winter 2002
- Tourist accommodation → winter 2002
- Furniture → 2003
- Tyres → 2003

# On the web

## What is the Green Store?

Environmentally conscious producers and consumers have now a meeting point outside the usual marketplaces. The Green Store is a section on the European Commission's Eco-label website intended as an extra marketing tool for producers and retailers. With this free service, the Commission wishes to reward the efforts of all the Flower companies by allowing them to display their products and company details. At the same time, it informs consumers about these green products, especially how they look like and where to find them.  
<http://europa.eu.int/comm/environment/ecolabel/consumers/greenstore.htm>

Flower companies are invited to send us this information, including points of sale and photos, of their eco-labelled products to the eco-label Helpdesk:  
[ecolabel@cec.eu.int](mailto:ecolabel@cec.eu.int)



# The Flower

This Newsletter is published by the eco-label unit of the European Commission both in printed form and on the Internet  
<http://europa.eu.int/ecolabel>

For a free subscription, comments or further information, please e-mail us at:  
[ecolabel@cec.eu.int](mailto:ecolabel@cec.eu.int)

or write to the Eco-Label Helpdesk:  
**fax: +32 2 282 84 54**  
**c/o Bradley Dunbar Associates**  
**Scotland House**  
**Rond-Point Schuman 6**  
**B-1040 Brussels**

